THE

TRIAL

OF

Doctor John Wolcot,

OTHERWISE

PETER PINDAR, ESQ.

FOR

CRIMINAL CONVERSATION

WITH THE WIFE OF

Mr. KNIGHT, OF THE ROYAL NAVY.

BEFORE

LORD ELLENBOROUGH,

King's Bench, Westminster;

the 27th, 1807.

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OPPER-PLATES.

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In the Court of King's Bench, Westminster;

On JUNE the 27th, 1807.

To which is added, an

ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE OF DR. WOLCOT.

EMBELLISHED WITH COPPER-PLATES.

LONDON.

Printed for and sold by J. DAY, 22, Fetter-lane, Fleet-street.

(PRICE ONE SHILLING.)

EXPLANATION OF THE PLATES.

1. Peter and his young Landlady in the Characters of Romeo and Juliet.

2. The Doctor and Mrs. Billington in Comus and Euphrosyne—"All I want of mortal man, is to love me while he can."

3. The Doctor in a most interesting and feeling Scene, with his fair Pupil.

4. The Battle of the Bards.

THE

TRIAL

OF

Dr. John Wolcot.

COUNSEL.

For the Prosecution—Mr. ATTORNEY-GENELAL and Mr. GARROW.

For the Defendant—Messrs. PARKE, JERVIS, and MARRYAT.

MR. GARROW

Opened the pleadings, ſtating, that this was an action brought againſt the defendant to recover damages for criminal converſation with the plaintiff's wife, and for which he laid the damages at Two Thouſand Pounds.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Said that the action inſtituted againſt the defendant was of a nature that required the moſt ſerious attention of the jury, which he was happy to ſee compoſed of gentlemen in a reſpectable ſphere of life, and who from their intelligence would be able to eſtimate juſtly and diſcriminately, the pecuniary ſatisfaction which, now, alas! was all that could be got, due to him on account of a moſt ſerious injury, aggravated by many circumſtances, which added to the weight, and inflamed the poignancy of his feelings. He had been deprived of the affection of a once amiable wife, and affectionate mother to his children; he had been reduced to that ſituation which at once makes a man an object of ridicule and compaſſion—he was in groſs language what the world calls a cuckold, a name of reproach ill to be borne by one who in no reſpect deſerved it; one who had proved the beſt and kindeſt, and moſt conſtant of husbands, and whoſe acuteneſs of feeling for ſo unmerited a wrong, could not but produce in his breaſt the acme of diſtreſs and of reſentment.

It was the juſt pride of the Engliſh law that it weighed every man's injury in an equal balance; that, founded upon the basis

of immutable juſtice, and the impartial adminiſtration of it in all caſes, it was accuſtomed to regard every ſubject in the ſame light, to ſmooth the inequalities of rank, and prop up the cauſe of the poor and lowly; and by a ſpecies of divine beneficence, to approximate all caſes to one uniform ſtandard, and one common ſcale of eſtimation. If it were ſaid, and it is certainly ſaid with juſtice, that in the holy temples of our faith, "the poor and the rich meet together, there is no diſtinction in the ſight of the Lord," it may be ſaid, with equal juſtice, becauſe the maxim is borrowed from that ſacred ſource, that in a court of juſtice, all are equal. We here know nothing of title and of rank, any further than to reſpect it according to its proper deſerts; you, gentlemen, pronounce your verdict without any reference to the character it affects—you ſhoot your bolt at vice; and ſo long as you obtain the object of your aim, which is to puniſh crimes and protect innocence, you are careleſs of future conſequences.

Theſe remarks are general, and encroach, perhaps upon your time. I will inſtruct you, therefore, in the narrative of this caſe, with all poſſible ſimplicity and brevity. In ſubjects of this ſort it is uſual to appeal to the feelings of the jury; I ſhall not—your juſtice is the beſt anchorage of my client's hopes; he will truſt to that, he demands no more.

In the month of November 1797, my client, whose name is Knight, was married to a Mis Franks, a lady extremely young, and of a most attractive person. The marriage was what may be strictly called a match of affection. My client was bred to the seafaring life, and was in the service of his king and country. For six years they lived together in the utmost harmony; they had four children; two of whom are dead; the two youngest are still living, to share the disgrace and misery of their father, and to lament the loss and alienation of a parent, by the artifices of a seducer. Of the affection that subsisted between them, I will give you abundant proof, up to the time when the train of the present crime was laid. They endured many hardships, amongst the rest shipwreck; but adversity knits together those whom prosperity separates. However obstructed by occasional misfortune, their stream of life might yet have rolled on in peace and mutual contentment, but for the practices of the defendant.

In the year 1806, Mr. Knight took a small house in Pratt Place, Camden Town. This house he let out in lodgings. In the month of August, Dr. Wolcot, the defendant, was recommended to these lodgings, and he accordingly engaged a bed chamber, which he rented at eight shillings per week. Shortly after, he removed from his attic to the first floor, and

became tenant of the drawing room and adjoining bed room. I ſhould inform you that he had lodgings in town likewiſe, and was accuſtomed upon every open and fine day, to walk thither, ſtaying at home chiefly in wet weather.

The defendant, I muſt tell you, is a man in years, old in vice, and the experience of wickedneſs, but with the paſſions of youth, which we ſhould have thought quelled in one of his age.

Being intimate as a lodger, he meditated the ſeduction in the following manner: He firſt practiſed upon the lady's vanity; he told her that ſhe had powers which were loſt in her preſent obſcurity, and which if employed in their right direction, would bring fame and emolument to hereſelf and husband. He flattered her into an opinion that ſhe would make an excellent actreſs; got her to recite to him; corrected her enunciation; ſhewed her the more graceful attitudes of the ſtage; and taught her much of that geſticulation and manner which we ſee upon the boards of the theatre. He told her that he had taught Mrs. Siddons; that he would gladly uſe his endeavours to make her as good an actreſs, and did not doubt of his ſucceſs. He added, that he could readily obtain her an engagement at the theatre; and that her ſalary would be conſiderable.

The wife believed him; the husband believed him likewiſe; in ſhort, it was a flattering repreſentation, and could not be doubted.

By means like theſe, gentlemen, he obtained the frequent company of this lady; and at length accompliſhed thoſe purpoſes which I ſhall diſcloſe to you in evidence; at the ſame time, if any thing could add to the infamy of defendant's behaviour, it was that he taught this formerly ſober as well as chaſte wife, habits of intoxication, and put her off her guard, and lay her vigilance asleep. Under theſe circumſtances, I leave, gentlemen, my client's caſe with confidence in your hands. Nothing can repair the injury he has ſuſtained in the infidelity of an affectionate wife; the only compenſation he can get is a pecuniary one; and which may at the ſame time ſerve as ſome puniſhment to this hoary letcher.

THE EVIDENCE.

The marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Knight was proved by banns, on the 17th of November, 1799.

MRS. POTTER

Examined by Mr. Attorney General.

Q. Do you know Mrs. Knight.—*A.* I do.

Q. How long have you known her.—*A.* About ſix years.

Q. Where did you firſt know her.—*A.* By lodging at my houſe in Great Caſtle ſtreet, Cavendiſh ſquare.

Q. How did ſhe ſupport herſelf.—*A.* She was a fancy dreſs maker.

Q. Where was her husband at this time.—*A.* He was in the Navy, abſent on ſervice; he went to ſea with captain Rowley.

Q. Mrs. Knight ſupported herſelf in his abſence by her induſtry.—*A.* Yes, by needle-work and dreſs-making.

Q. Do you know whether from your own knowledge, ſhe had any remittances from her husband; did not her husband contribute to her ſupport, or did ſhe ſuppor herſelf wholly by her trade.—*A.* She was very aſſiduous to her buſineſs, but had, I believe, remittances from her huſband.

Q. Did he pay you any arrears for lodgings when he came home.—*A.* Yes, ſir, he did.

Q. Mr. Knight then, from what you obſerved, was a very affectionate husband, and contributed to the ſupport of his wife during his abſence.—*A.* He did ſo.

Q. And what did Mrs. Knight appear to you.—*A.* She appeared to me a moſt excellent young woman ; a tender mother and moſt affectionate wife.

Cross-examined.

Q. Don't Caſtle ſtreet lead into Newman ſtreet.—*A.* It is near Newman ſtreet, ſir.

Q. Were Mrs. Knight's earnings ſufficient to ſupport her, and ſufficient to ſatisfy you for the lodging.—*A.* Yes, She got a good deal of money, being very induſtrious.

Q. You never ſaw any thing improper in her behaviour. —*A.* Nothing but what was very proper.

MARY CROWE.

Examined by Mr. Garrow.

Q. How long have you known Mr. Knight.—*A.* More than ſix years.

Q. How long have you known Mrs. Knight.—*A.* About the ſame time.

Q. Did they appear to you to live happily together.—*A.* Yes, he was a very good husband, and ſhe a very good wife.

Q. You know ſhe had ſome children, what kind of mother was ſhe.—*A.* A good mother, and very careful in all reſpects.

Q. In fact, they were a happy couple.—*A.* I do not think there could be a happier couple.

THOMAS KNIGHT.

Q. You are the plaintiff's brother.—*A.* I am.

Q. What do you know of his domeſtic concerns ; do you know any thing of Dr. Wolcot.—*A.* I know that he lodged up two pair of ſtairs at my brother's houſe, and paid eight ſhillings a-week.

Q. Do you remember any thing elſe.—*A.* No, ſir.

ELIZABETH CARTER.

Examined by Sir Vickery Gibbs.

Q. You are ſervant to Mrs. Knight.—*A.* I was.

Q. You are not ſervant now.—*A.* No, I left Mrs. Knight three weeks before Chriſtmas.

Q. Did you maſter and miſtreſs live happily together.—*A.* Very much ſo.

Q. Your miſtreſs dreſſed decently, was ſober, a good wife, and careful mother.—*A.* She was all that you ſay, ſir.

Q. Did Dr. Wolcot lodge there while you was there.—*A.* He did ; I left him there when I went way.

Q. What part of the houſe did the doctor occupy.—*A.* The bed-room two pair only at firſt, but afterwards he had the dining room and the back dining room.

Q. Did you ever ſee him behave rudely to your miſtreſs. *A.* He uſed to behave very rudely to me.

Q I dont enquire about yourſelf ; did you ever ſee him behave rudely to your miſtreſs, any thing which you thought was not right.—*A.* I have ſeen her go into the doctor's room very neatly dreſſed, and when ſhe came out ſhe has been tumbled, and her dreſs very much pulled about.

Q. What room have you ſeen her go in and come out in this manner.—*A.* The dining room.

Q. What do you mean by her dreſs being pulled about, deſcribe it.—*A.* Her handkerchief was unpinned, and ſhe was indecent altogether.

Q. What do you mean by indecent ; ſtate it—the court will ask you nothing which you need be aſhamed to ſay. —*A.* Her boſom was naked

Q. Is this all you ſaw.—*A.* Once when I came into the room without knocking, the doctor had his hand round her boſom.

Q. Did you ſee this more than once.—*A.* No.

Q. Did you ever ſee any thing elſe.—*A.* Yes, one time when I came in at tea, the doctor had his hand on my miſtreſs's knee.

Q. State what elſe you may have ſeen.—*A.* I have ſeen the doctor often lying on the ſofa without his coat whilſt Mrs. Knight was in the room.

Q. Where was Mrs. Knight at this particular time.—*A.* At the window.

Q. When you have ſeen her come out of the doctor's dining-room, have you obſerved any thing more about her than the diſorder of her cloaths.—*A.* I have ſeen her hair down about her ſhoulders, and over her face.

Q. Was no one with her when ſhe entered the room.—*A.* No, ſir.

Q. How did ſhe uſually wear her hair.—*A.* Under a bonnet, ſir, and a bandeau in the front.

Q. When ſhe came out of the room her hair was down, as if ſhe had been tumbled.—*A.* Yes, ſir.

Q. When your miſtreſs had left the doctor's room did her dreſs ſhow any part of her perſon which was not ſhown before.—*A.* Nothing but her boſom, ſir.

Q. In what ſtate were the windows of the dining-room whilſt your miſtreſs and the doctor were together.—*A.* The window ſhutters were half ſhut.

Q. In the day time.—*A.* Yes, ſir.

Croſs-examined by Mr. Park.

You lived ſervant with Mr. Knight before the doctor lodged there.—*A.* Yes, ſir. I left him there when I went away.

Q. When did you quit your place.—*A.* About three weeks before Chriſtmas.

Q. Were there any other lodgers beſides the doctor.—*A.* Yes, ſeveral.

Q. The houſe is not very large.—*A.* There are four rooms on a floor, and three floors; a paſſage went through the middle, ſo that on each floor two rooms on one ſide were oppoſite to each other.

Q. Doctor Wolcot is a very old and infirm man, almoſt blind; upwards of ſeventy years of age.—*A.* Yes, ſir, he is ſeventy.

Q. He is likewiſe a very dirty man.—*A.* Very much ſo.

Q. He was very aſthmatic, and uſed frequently to lay down without his coat for want of air.—*A.* I have ſeen him often without his coat

Q. You have very often ſeen him without his coat; ſometimes when Mrs, Knight was in the room, and ſometimes when ſhe was not there.—*A.* Yes, ſir.

Q. What ſum did the doctor pay for his lodgings.—*A.* He paid eight ſhillings a week, as I underſtood.

Re-examined by Mr. Garrow.

The doctor you ſay was very infirm—pray was he ſo when he was rude to you.—*A.* No, when he wanted to pull any one about, he was very ſtrong.

Re-examined by Lord Ellenborough.

Doctor Wolcot was uſed to teach your miſtreſs to ſpeak verſes, to recite, to act.—*A.* Yes, my lord.

Q. You have often ſeen him give her leſſions.—*A.* Yes, my lord.

Q. When you entered the room at tea-time, without knocking at the door, and the doctor had his hand round your miſtreſse's neck, did they appear to you as if they were acting.—*A.* No, my lord.

Q. You have ſaid that once, when you entered the room unexpectedly, the doctor had his hand on your miſtreſſes's knee; was it on the point of her knee.—*A.* Yes, my lord.

Q. You mentioned likewiſe that you have ſeen the doctor laying on the ſofa without his coat; have you ever ſeen him in the ſame manner laying on the ſofa with his coat off when your miſtreſs was not there.—*A.* Yes, my lord.

MRS. DYKE

Examined by Mr. Garrow.

Q. You were a lodger, I believe at Mr. Knight's.—*A.* Yes, ſir.

Q. Doctor Wolcot was likewiſe a lodger there.—*A.* Yes, he came in Auguſt laſt.

Q. Are you well acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Knight.—*A.* Yes, ſir. I had no ſervant, and therefore as I did the work myſelf, I ſaw Mrs. Knight almoſt every minute.

Q. What kind of a woman did Mrs. Knight appear to you to be.—*A.* A very prudent woman.

Q. She apparently lived happy together with her husband.—*A.* Yes, they appeared a happy couple.

Q. That was before the doctor came.—*A.* Yes, sir.

Q. There was a great change afterwards.—*A.* She was not the same woman,

Q. What apartment did the doctor occupy when he first came.—*A.* A bed room on the two pair, but afterwards he had the dining room, and the back bed room.

Q. When did you first notice any change in Mrs. Knight's conduct.—*A.* About six weeks after the doctor changed his apartment.

Q. What was that change.—*A.* She weaned her child, and was careless of her domestic concerns, and was intoxicated.

Q. Did she usually dress very neat.—*A.* Yes, very neat and genteel.

Q. State any thing that you have seen, and which struck you at the time as improper.—*A.* I have seen her go into the doctor's room very neat and genteel, and when she has come out her clothes have been much tumbled and herself in great disorder.

Q. Have you ever seen her enter the room sober and come out intoxicated.—*A.* I have, frequently.

Q. How came you first to notice her conduct.—*A.* By the report of the maid.

Q. After the report of the maid, what did you observe. *A.* I saw her one day come down with all her clothes nearly off her back, and go into the doctor's room.

Q. How long was she in the room at that time.—*A.* Two hours at least.

Q. Have you at any other time seen her enter the doctor's room, under circumstances which you thought improper.—*A.* Frequently, sir.

Q. State the circumstances.—*A.* I have repeatedly seen her enter the doctor's dining room very neatly dressed, and come out with her dress tumbled in an indecent manner.

Q. Can you state any particular time when she did this.—*A.* Yes, one day in particular when she had put on a clean white gown, and went up stairs to the doctor's bedroom.

Q. Well; be particular. How long did she stay.—*A.* The whole time between dinner and tea.

Q. Did you hear any thing during that time.—*A.* No,

all was quiet; it ſeemed as if they had been to ſleep together.

Q. When ſhe came down how did she look.—*A.* As if she had not been right; as if they had been asleep together.

Q. How was her dreſs.—*A.* She had changed her dreſs, and come down in a green gown.

Q. Are you ſure the gown she went up in was clean.—*A.* Yes, it had not been an hour from the mangle.

Q. Where was her husband at this time.—*A.* Gone to Norwood, it was ſuppoſed.

Q. Did the doctor and ſhe drink tea together.—*A.* Yes, ſir, in the dininging-room.

Q. And remained together the whole evening till bed time.—*A.* Yes, ſir.

Q. State what further you know.—*A.* My husband and myſelf ſlept in the room under the bed-room, and we heard the doctor and Mrs. Knight laughing and playing together like two people in bed.

Q. Did they laugh all the time you heard them in bed.—*A.* No, ſir, after laughing and playing ſome time, they ſeemed as if they had fallen aſleep.

Q. Had this laughing or playing any appearance as if they were acting together.—*A.* It did not appear like any thing of the kind, ſir.

Q. Have you ever ſeen any thing ſimilar to this at any other time.—*A.* Yes, very frequently.

Q. Did her conduct appear changed towards her huſband and children; was her manner altered from what it had been before the doctor came down into the dining-room.—*A.* Yes, ſir, ſhe was no longer the ſame perſon; ſhe became negligent to her husband, and children.

Q. You have ſtated, I think, that before the doctor came down into the dining-room, ſhe was very neat, in her dreſs.—*A.* Yes.

Croſs-examined by Mr. Marryat.

Q. In what line of life did you underſtand Mr. Knight, the husband of this woman, to be.—*A.* A Navy officer ſir.

Q. When the ſervant left Mrs. Knight, ſhe uſed to do all the work of the houſe herſelf.—*A.* Yes, ſir.

Q. She was in fact who in a gent'eman's family would have been called the houſe maid.—*A.* Yes, ſir.

Q. Was it not you who put the husband under the ſofa. —*A.* Me; no, ſir.

Q. Did not you ſay that you did.—*A.* Not that I recollect.

Q. It is impoſſible but you muſt recollect if you ſaid ſo or not. Did you never ſay to any one that you adviſed the husband to go under the ſofa.—*A.* I do not remember, ſir, to have ſaid ſo.

Q. I muſt have an anſwer.—*A.* I never did ſay ſo.

Q. And when you received the ſubpœna ſhilling, did not you ſay, here goes the ſubpœna ſhilling for half a pint of gin.—*A.* Me, ſir, ſay ſo; No, ſir, I never did ſay ſo.

Q. What, you never drink gin, I ſuppoſe —*A.* I have often fetched gin for my husband, but never by a ſhilling's worth at a time.

Q. And did you not ſay that you had taught the ſcheme of the ſofa, and that you would make the old raſcal pay one thouſand pounds.—*A.* I don't remember, ſir, I ever ſaid ſo.

Q. You muſt remember—I muſt have a direct anſwer—did you ſay ſo or not.—*A.* I did not adviſe the ſofa.

Q. I do not aſk you if you adviſed the ſcheme of the ſofa I aſk you if you did not ſay that you adviſed it—did you not ſay the words I have mentioned.—*A.* I did not adviſe the husband to go under the ſofa.

Q. This is equivocation—on your oath I ask you, did you not ſay that you had taught the ſcheme of the ſofa, and would make the old raſcal pay one thouſand pounds.—*A.* I might have ſaid ſo, ſir.

Mr. WILLIAM DYKE.

Examined by Sir Vicary Gibbs.

Q. Are you the husband of the laſt witneſs.—*A.* I am.

Q. You lodged at Mr. Knight's houſe in December laſt.

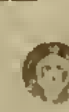
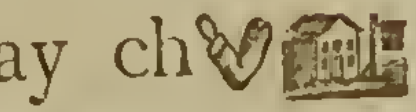
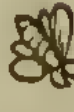
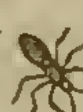
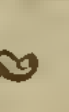
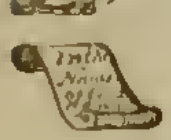
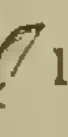
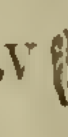
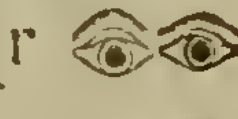
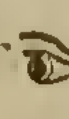
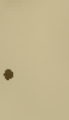
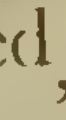
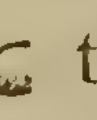
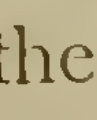
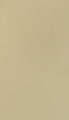
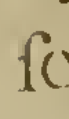
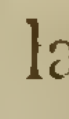
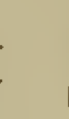
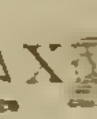
A. Yes, ſir.

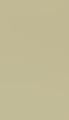
Q. Where did you ſleep in the courſe of December laſt. —*A.* On the floor under doctor Wolcot.

Q. Do you remember any thing about that time, the 23d December laſt, which excited your attention —*A.* I was one night in bed, when there was no one in the houſe but

An Hieroglyphical Letter by Peter Pindar.

Lovely ,

S ce  day ch  have  een , UU   w my , ts t
 fort oor eter my d . W
my & wll  ro w  &
flo ng CC, thnk of , r 
yy sh n r ll  as the  the are 
d ll them.  h  m  s n a fed,
fer  , My sh land has loUUed 
n ratt ,  fli off. w
U at x  at the & m on day.

Fare  my tvatng ,

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An Hieroglyphical

Lovely

Mrs. Knight, the doctor, and a ſingle man; being in bed I heard two people over my head in doctor Wolcot's apartment, laughing and playing together, as if in bed.

Q. Did they laugh and play the whole time.—*A.* No ſir, they laughed and played ſome time, and then ſeemed quiet.

Q. State what you mean by laughing and playing together.—*A.* Like two people in bed, ſir.

Q. Was any one in bed with you when you heard this —*A.* My wife, ſir.

Q. And did you make any remark to your wife upon the occaſion.—*A.* Yes, I ſaid that the doctor and Mrs. Knight ſeemed very comfortable together.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH.

And was that all the obſervation that you deemed it neceſſary to make.—*A.* Yes, my lord.

Q. And having made this obſervation you were perfectly ſatisfied, and fell aſleep.—*A.* Yes, my lord.

Q. And how could you in any way reconcile it to your own mind to think and ſpeak of ſuch a crime with ſuch an indifference, and to employ ſuch an expreſſion.——— No reply.

MR. PARKE

My Lord, and Gentlemen of the Jury.

I will not take up much of your time in making any comments upon the evidence—it does not require it—it ſpeaks for itſelf.

I remember, my lord and gentlemen, that when I was a young man, and firſt began the ſtudy of the law, reading a caſe in my lord Hale, which made a moſt ſerious impreſſion upon me—an impreſſion, my lord, which no

time will erase. Lord Hale himſelf relates it as a warning to all juries, and therefore I ſhall mention it in ſome detail. An infirm old man, gentlemen, like my client, was indicted for a rape. The evidence was full, on precise, and poſitive.—To make ſhort of it the man was convicted. The judge, according to the usual form demanded of him what he had to ſay why ſentence ſhould not be paſſed upon him. "My Lord, and Gentlemen of the Jury," replied the infirm criminal," the evidence is full and poſitive—I know, therefore, that what I ſay will not be believed—I know that you muſt not believe my word in contradiction to the poſitive oaths of the witneſs—I will not, therefore, ſay any thing. But I declare moſt ſolemnly that I am innocent—I will declare more, that I cannot be guilty of this crime: and, if your lordſhip will but permit ſome of the gentlemen of the jury to retire with me, I will convince them that I am innocent." The neceſſary permiſſion was given—the jury retired with the criminal, and in five minutes after returned into Court, declaring to the Judge, that from phyſical incapabilities he could not be guilty of this crime.

Mr. Park, ſaid, this was the moſt infamous conſpiracy that ever was trumped up in a court of juſtice.——The defendant was upwards of ſeventy years of age, blind, aſthmatic, and altogether a very antidote to love. He

was so helpless, that he constantly required attendants, and that sort of personal assistance for which the female sex are best adapted—he wanted a nurse, not a bedfellow.—Mrs. Knight having no servant, performed these offices—tucking up the clothes when he went to bed, placing a bottle of warm water to his decrepid feet, in order to give some warmth to his enervate frame. From his professed kindness to her she devoted herself to those little attentions; and now the husband of this woman avails herself of an opportunity to charge this decayed old man with the crime of adultery, in order to plunder him by the sentence of a court of justice.

I wish to God, gentlemen, you could see this man, this Peter Pindar! You would soon discover that he had no Pindaric fire, or any other fire whatever. Let him step into the jury-box, and he will infallibly plead his cause better than I can.

Gentlemen, if the thing were not indelicate in itself, I might advert to circumstances which would prove to you that such were the natural infirmities of this man, that he was physically incapable of the crime; and as to money, instead of being able to pay two thousand, pounds he is almost in a state of want, subsisting on an annuity from the bookseller for

which he formerly wrote poems, if ſo could be called, the veriest traſh I ever ſaw.

The adultery is proved in no ſingle part or poſſible cauſes. The evidence of the maid ſervant only inſtructs you that her miſtreſs was once in a diſordered dreſs; one of her breaſts being uncovered, and her hair diſhevelled.—Well! the doctor was teaching her to act. She was, perhaps, at that moment, Euphraſia in the Grecian Daughter, employed in the charitable office of adminiſtering her breaſt for nouriſhment to the lips of her exhauſted parent. The maid ſaw the doctor ſometimes with his coat on ſometimes off what then? He had once his hands round her neck; what then? He was inſtructing her to to act. Once he laid his hands on her knee; he was blind, and knew not where he put them.

As to Mrs. Dyke's evidence, it was little ſhort of the guilt of perjury. She mainifeſtly equivocated, and denied what ſhe afterwards confeſſed to be true in part. In a word, gentlemen, if the crime of adultery be proved in this caſe, I know not any old man, in ſimilar circumſtances with the doctor, who would not ſtand a chance of being impleaded on the ſame charge in a court of juſtice.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH

Made several observations upon the equivocal nature of the circumstances against the defendant, which he considered might possibly arise from the freedom which might take place between the defendant and Mrs. Knight, considering the difference of their age, and the circumstance of his teaching her to act. The putting his hand upon her knee might also be very natural in the heat of conversation. When teaching her to act he must put her hands into certain postures, and declaiming and acting would probably disorder her dress —but the jury must decide whether the fact proved exceeded the measure of that allowance which must be made for the education of the parties.

The principal fact relied upon, was the history of the day when the husband was at Norwood, and he very much disapproved of the jocular manner in which Dyke treated the supposed guilt of Mrs. Knight. If he really suspected her he should have gone up stairs and ascertained the fact. If he found she remained longer im the doctor's room than was proper, he should have remonstrated with her, and communicated his suspicions to the injured husband. He considered also that there was some improbability in the account of the transaction of that day, considered with a view to the actual criminality of the defendant. He was represented as old and feeble, yet it was suggested that the repeated excesses of his wicked passions were on that day, insatiable beyond all dergees of ordinary probability.

In this case the whole depended upon the evidence of circumstances, which were equivocal, and there were other means of ascertaining the facts with great certainty, to which the curiosity of the witnesses would have been naturally led, and which commonly existed in other cases, but not adduced in this.

The jury almost instantly gave a verdict for the Defendant.

MEMOIRS OF DR. WOLCOT.

" Old as I am, for ladies' work unfit,
" The pow'r of beauty I remember yet."

DR. WOLCOT is a native of Devonſhire. He was born about the year 1734, and was educated at Kingsbridge, a village near his birth place. At an early age, however, his uncle, an apothecary at Fowey in Cornwall, took him under his charge, with a view to his ſucceeding him in buſineſs. Here he acquired a tolerable ſhare of medical knowledge, and was in great eſteem with his kinſman and the neighbourhood. At his leiſure hours he cultivated his mind by reading, and made a conſiderable progreſs in drawing and painting. He alſo made muſic a ſtudy; and to complete the round of the ſiſter arts, he exhibited ſome juvenile productions in poetry, very creditable to his taſte.

He remained in this ſituation, aſſiſting his uncle, and aſſiduouſly performing the duties of his profeſſion until the year 1769, when ſir William Trelawney, a diſtant relation of his own, and a great friend of his family, being appointed governor of Jamaica, he was anxious to accompany him, and " by labourſome petition, wrung from his uncle his ſlow leave." The old gentleman was diſappointed in his favourite ſcheme reſpecting him, and was to be deprived of a moſt uſeful aſſiſtant, but he could not withſtand his nephew's ſolicitations, therefore, he waited on the go-

vernor, who readily agreed to take him as his private ſecretary.

During the voyage, the veſſel touched at Madeira; where, enchanted with the beau-beauties which Nature ſo luxuriantly exhibits in this iſland, he wrote ſome excellent ſonnets. During his reſidence in Jamaica, his ſatirical propenſity began to ſhew itſelf. He was the author of ſome pretty ſharp lampoons on perſons in the army of conſequence, who at a future period did not fail to remember them, ſo as to put a ſtop to his favour with government.

Not long after the doctor had been in Jamaica, the incumbent of the moſt valuable living in the iſland, the pariſh of St. Andrew, paid the laſt tribute to Nature, and the governor was ready to confer the rectory on our author, but unfortunately he was not in orders. However as there was no clergyman at hand to ſupply the place of the deceaſed, he actually took upon him the charge, and for a time officiated. Fearing, however, that he ſhould be ſuperſeded by a regular miniſter, properly inſtituted to the living, the doctor ſet ſail for England, carrying with him earneſt letters of recommendation from ſir William Trelawney to the biſhop of London. But though this application was backed pretty ſtrongly by ſome conſiderable friends in England, the biſhop refuſed to admit him, on the ground, we believe, of his having preſumed to perform the miniſterial duties without ordination.

Being thus diſappointed, he obtained from the univerſity of St. Andrews in Scotland, a degree of M. D. and went to Truro in Cornwall, where he practiſed for ſeveral years as a phyſician with credit and ſucceſs. About this time his uncle

died, and left him nearly 2000l. He gave during his reſidence here conſiderable vent to his ſatirical muſe, and alſo got himſelf involved in ſome troubleſome law ſuits, in conſequence of which he reſolved to quit the country for a ſphere more congenial to his diſpoſition and talents; and about the year 1780 he repaired to London.

It may be proper here to mention that during his reſidence in Truro, the doctor had an opportunity of bringing forward an eminent natural genius, the late lamented John Opie, whoſe rude drawing in common chalk, eſpecially likeneſſes, the doctor viewed with curioſity and pleaſure, in his rides through the village of St. Arne. where Opie was a pariſh apprentice to one Wheeler, a houſe carpenter. Theſe drawings were ſuch as induced doctor Wolcot to take him into his houſe, and inſtruct him in the art of drawing; and he ſoon profited ſo by the leſſons of his patron, as greatly to ſurprize and gratify the latter. Opie ſoon after went to Exeter, where he acquired ſome knowledge of oil painting. From that city he removed to London, and ſtudied under ſir Joſhua Reynolds. His firſt exhibition, at the Royal Academy, was in 1786, and his ſubſequent merits are now as well known as his death is generally lamented. It may be further neceſſary to ſay, that doctor Wolcot was at great pains in bringing forward this artiſt, not only by recommendations among his acquaintances but by his writings.

To return to the doctor's own hiſtory: his removal to London, was made principally with a view of being appointed to the medical ſtaff; and which he ſtrongly ſolicited but without ſucceſs;

principally we believe from the oppoſition made by certain officers of rank, whom he had lampooned at Jamaica. His refuſal made him at once turn Patriot, for ſuch is the name aſſumed by thoſe diſcontented characters, who endeavour to harras a government. " I can eaſily," ſaid ſir Robert Walpole, " make twenty patriots a-day; only by refuſing ſome unreaſonable application." The ſame circumſtance will account for the doctor's marked ſeverity againſt the king.

Doctor Wolcot now took up authorſhip as a profeſſion; and has ever ſince ſubſiſted on the fruits of his Muſe. All his productions have been publiſhed under the aſſumed name of PETER PINDAR, a name by no means appropriate, as his poetry, and that of the Grecian Pindar, are altogether of a different character and deſcription. The firſt publication was in 1782, entitled Epiſtle to the Reviewers, a laughable piece of ſatire, but which remained for ſome time unnoticed, till at length ſome perſons of taſte brought into notoriety, and it was reviewed a very conſiderable time after its publication. Such a work could not expect the moſt favourable character from thoſe it was intended to laſh.—His next performance was Odes to the Royal Academicians, in which is a happy mixture of wit and elegance, but not always impartiality. Theſe odes, however, ſtamped his fame, and the novelty of his manner brought him into great faſhion. About the ſame time he produced a performance of ſtill more originality and boldneſs, the Louſiad, a mock heroic poem, which came out at different periods in

cantos, in which he abuſes his majeſty and the royal family with very little ceremony. It would be occupying too much time time to go through all his numerous publications. One of the beſt of them is Bozzi and Piozzi, in which the folly of Dr. Johnſon's tittle-tattle biographers is expoſed in the happieſt manner.

Peter has had the misfortune to quarrel very frequently with his bookſellers; the firſt of theſe was Mr. Jervis of Wild court, but they ſoon dropped their connection. He then employed Mr. Kearſley of Fleet ſtreet, who publiſhed a number of his beſt performances. An incident, however, occurred, which could hardly fail to diſguſt our poet.

He was never married; and by way of economy he has never kept a ſervant, but wherever he has lodged, has made an agreement with the miſtress that ſhe or her ſervants ſhould attend on him. Being always of an amorous turn, the beauty and apparent comeatability of miſtreſs or maid have always had a great influence on him in the choice of lodgings; and many a time, like a great number of others, has been a dupe to his own over economy, being obliged to pay huſh money for the indulgence of his whimſical propenſities.

At the time we are now ſpeaking of, he had chambers in the Temple, where he employed a handſome laundreſs, whom he called his Cleopatra. A near relation of Mr. Kearſley, who was in the habit of attending him with proofs, caſt an eye of affection on this damſel, and viſited her in his abſence. One unlucky day, however, the doctor

coming in, rather inopportunely, in the midſt of a ſcene of courtſhip, the youth made the beſt of his way by another door. The conſequence was the doctor turned off his bookſeller, diſmiſſed his Cleopatra, and quitted his chambers.

His next bookſeller was Simmons of Paternoſter Row, but the doctor could not long brook his averice petulance and ignorance. He left him, and applied to Mr. James Evans; he publiſhed the Epiſtle to Lord Lonſdale, who commenced a proſecution. This alarmed Peter not a little; he however conſoled himſelf by thinking it could not be brought home to him; but Evans told him plainly, "they may not perhaps be able to prove againſt you, but they can againſt me; and depend upon it I am determined to give you up." Peter with all his bullying is a coward at heart; and this threat completely diſcompoſed him. He made the moſt abject ſubmiſſions, and through the interference of ſome friends, the proſecution was dropt.

His next bookſeller was Mr. Walker, who publiſhed a good many of his publications. Mr. Walker knew well how to manage him. The doctor at this time wiſhed to ſecure himſelf a permanency, and he made a propoſal to Mr. Walker to aſſign to him the copy right of all his works on receiving an annuity of 250l. ſecured on real property. Mr. Walker propoſed to Mr. George Robinſon (a very eminent bookſeller, but with whom the doctor himſelf would never have any dealings) to join with him; but neither being able to give freehold ſecurity, they were obliged to take in a third, to wit, Mr. Golding, and the agreement was acceded to. At this time he appeared

very ill: and the Morning Poſt, and other papers in his intereſt, had repeated paragraphs of the dangerous ſtate he was in. When he called at Mr. Walker's too, he made it appear that he had acquired a great cuſtom of drinking brandy, or ſtrong brandy and water. This manœuvre had ſo good an effect that Mr. Robinſon in particular was terrified leaſt he ſhould die before the deeds were executed. One day he ſent over to Mr. Walker, begging him to bring the agreement. The latter could not find it; on which Robinſon told him "you are a ſtupid ignorant blockhead; it will loſe you a thouſand pounds; the doctor is dying and we ſhall not get the agreement executed," At length it was found; the deeds were prepared, and the doctor requeſted to ſign them, which he moſt readily did. Next day he was up and well, and would drink no more brandy, to the great mortification of the triumvirate.

About this time he publiſhed his Port Folio of ſcraps, which had a tolerably good ſale. His aſſigns moſt abſurdly pretended a right to this, and indeed to all he ſhould thereafter write; the doctor laughed at them; they ſtopped his annuity, and he brought an action, and after being at conſiderable expence, they gave it up, without coming to a trial.

Since that time he has publiſhed little, and that little has ſold but indifferently. His writings had loſt their novelty. He had in fact overwritten himſelf, and the world was diſpleaſed with his principles and conduct of dragging ſo many characters into notoriety and ridicule.

About ſix years ago ſome ſcurrilous articles appeared in the Times, and which no other newspaper would inſert, inſinuating, we ſincerely believe very falſely, that the doctor was addicted to certain propenſities, and which were ſuppoſed to be from the pen of Mr. Giffard, a notorious miniſterial ſcribbler. This naturally enraged our hero, who ſwore the firſt time he met the raſcal he would cane him. They met ; a few days after at the ſhop of Mr. Wright, bookſeller in Piccadilly. The doctor immediately accuſed Giffard with of the author of the paragraphs alluded to, and inſiſted on his acknowledgment or denial ; the other having given an evaſive anſwer, the doctor lifted up his cane and broke his head. A ſcuffle enſued ; the doctor loſt his hat and wig, and unfortunately the waiſtband of his breeches burſt, and they fell down to his heels. In this ſituation, the byſtanders in the ſhop, taking the part of Giffard, turned out poor Peter, and threw after him his hat and wig. He, however, went off in a coach, exulting that he had kept his word. The rencontre was for a time a ſource of general merriment, and the cauſe of conſiderable inkſhed, under the title of the Battle of the Bards. (See the Plate.)

Although the doctor was never on the ſtage, he has paid much attention to dramatic action, and a variety of female performers have ſtudied under him. He glories in having been an inſtructor of Mrs. Siddons ; but whatever may have been the tutor's inclination, that lady's correctneſs of behaviours prevented any attempt at improper liberties. Some of his ſubſequent ſcholars, however, have not been ſo faſtedious.

Among the doctor's pupils was the enchantreſs Billington, for whom he wrote a variety of ſongs, and whoſe recitation was much improved by his inſtructions, in the many private rehearſals they had together. Their favourite performance was Milton's charming mask, in which Peter, fantaſtically dreſſed and decorated with flowers, perſonated Comus; and the lady in looſe and flowing attire repreſented Euphroſyne: —when ſhe ſang

All I aſk of mortal man,
Is to love me while he can,

Peter's extacy was unſpeakable. (See the ſcene in the Plate).

Another lovely woman was a favourite pupil, Mrs. Crouch, whom he not only taught to act, but they occaſionally performed duets, and drank brandy and water together. For this lady and Mr. Kelly, he wrote the admired duet, "O thou wert born to pleaſe me," introduced in Comus, and alledged to be compoſed by Kelly. Dining once at her houſe with a conſiderable party, the doctor begged her to ſing this as a ſolo; she with ſtriking emphaſis began, "O thou wert born to *teize* me" which ſo offended the irritable bard, that he immediately turned on his heel, and never after honoured her with his company.

Having been affected by an aſthmatic complaint ever ſince his return from Jamaica, he has always had a lodging out of town as well as in town. In 1804 he went to lodge at Delancey-place, Camden Town, where he remained till Auguſt laſt; then he removed to Mr. Knight's in Pratt-place, attracted, it would appear, by the charms

both of miſtreſs and maid. As to the maid, ſhe has ſworn that he "repeatedly offered to be rude to her;" but according to her own account, ſhe did not ſurrender her virtue. The immaculate virgin, however, left the place about three months after the doctor took the lodgings, and Mrs. Knight afterwards did ALL the family DUTIES herſelf.

The doctor ſoon perceived that Mrs. Knight was a gay young woman; one that would not long ſtand a ſiege; and as ſhe uſed to aſſiſt him in going up and down ſtairs, placing bottles of warm water to his decrepid feet, rubbing his limbs in the manner of the fair beguine to corporal Trim, tucking up the bed clothes, &c. he had much opportunity for his purpoſe. With this view he perſuaded her to ſtudy acting, for which Nature had eminently fitted her. He ſaid he had inſtructed Mrs. Siddons, and would be happy to inſtruct her, and he had no doubt she would ſoon be able to make 2000l. a-year. This propoſition charmed the lady, as well as her Tender Husband, who had no difficulty in leaving the amourous tutor and his willing pupil together. On theſe occaſions it is pretty clear that more was acted than plays, and that ſhe *imbibed* ſomething elſe beſides dramatic knowledge We had almoſt forgot to mention, that the better to attain his conqueſt, the doctor not only taught the lady to act plays, but to drink brandy and water, to ſo great exceſs as ſometimes to occaſion ſtupefaction.

Although Knight was blind, and certainly acted the Careleſs Huſband, Mrs. Dyke, a lodger in the houſe, was ſufficiently attentive to the ſcenes that were performed "behind the curtain." She had often ſeen Mrs. Knight's dreſs diſcompoſed and rumpled after their rehearſals; nay, ſhe and her husband, who slept under the doctor's room, one night heard them diſtinctly "very COMFORTABLE together," and apparently playing the part of Man and Wife. Mother Dyke, big with the news, informed Mr. Knight what ſhe had ſeen and heard, and propoſed to him to pretend to ſet out for Norwood, but ſo to manage, as to ſecrete himſelf under the doctor's ſopha. The now Suſpicious Husband took her advice, and played the part of Peeping Tom. Shortly after, the theatrical dou made their appearance on the ſtage. They

rehearſed ſome of the moſt pathetic ſcenes in Romeo and Juliet, perfectly con amore. Next as Euphraſia ſhe tendered her tempting breaſts to the feeble Evander. Then, aſſuming the character of Caliſta, ſhe exclaimed,

"Strike home, and I will bleſs thee for the blow;"

in a manner ſo faſcinating that our hero, wound up to a pitch, was proceeding to act his part on the ſopha, when the Provoked Huſband ſuddenly appearing from behind the *ſcenes*, he abruptly made his *exit*. Whether the guilty lovers have ſince met, we are not at liberty to diſcloſe, but a ſeparation took place between the Cornuto and the Fair Penitent, and an action of damages was inſtituted againſt the antient Ranger. The trial has taken place and the doctor obtained a verdict.

The doctor once more threatens to be an author, aye and a moral one!!! The following advertiſement appeared in the SUNDAY REVIEW, of the 31ſt of May, 1807, which we copy verbatim.

"NEWGATE BIRDS.

"PETER PINDAR proposes publishing something new every week for the amuſement of the Public, ſerious and comic, in proſe or verſe.

"His FIRST EXHIBITION—A humorous Deſcription of Newgate Birds in St. Stephen's Chapel, as they were ſurveyed by an Honorable Member of Parliament in the Year 1802.

"SECOND WEEK—Church in Danger, or Knaves and Fools all alive, performing the Comedy of Much ado about Nothing. A Satire.

"THIRD WEEK—A ſerious Letter to John Walbrook, Eſq. reſpecting his extreme Ignorance of the Dignity, Wiſdom, and Power of the Creator.

"FOURTH WEEK—The Methodiſt in Heaven. A Satire.

"Subſcribers may give what they pleaſe to the Author, who does not publiſh from Pecuniary Motives, but to exalt their Ideas of the Creator, and (if poſſible) humble the ſilly Prrde of Man.

"Letters (poſt paid), addreſſed to P. P. No. 12, Little-Guilford-ſtreet, Ruſſel Square, will be ſtrictly attended to."

END.

Butters, Fetter-lane.

20196